

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SANAA PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY
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USLO PEKING PRIORITY
USINT CAIRO PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
CINCEUR PRIORITY
CINCUSNAVEUR PRIORITY
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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, UK, IO

SUBJECT: DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION, Q'S AND A'S

1. THE FOLLOWING ARE US-UK JOINTLY AGREED Q'S AND A'S
REGARDING PROPOSED EXPANSION FACILITY ON DIEGO GARCIA.
UPON CONFIRMATION BY EMBASSY LONDON OF FINAL FCO CONCURRENCE
AND EXECUTION INSTRUCTIONS WHICH WE ANTICIPATE CABLING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, YOU MAY DRAW UPON Q'S AND A'S AS
NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE IN YOUR NOTIFICATION DISCUSSIONS
WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS. Q'S AND A'S FOLLOW:

1. Q. WHAT IS OUR CURRENT POLICY WITH REGARD TO
MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN?

A. AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE HISTORICALLY MAINTAINED
A PERMANENT NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. OUR
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MIDDLE EAST FORCE HAS BEEN THERE SINCE 1949. PRIOR TO
THE BUILDUP IN VIETNAM, WE HAD INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT THAT
SMALL PERMANENT PRESENCE WITH PERIODIC VISITS OF OTHER
FORCES. WE ARE NOW RETURNING TO THAT ORIGINAL POLICY.
THIS IS PART OF A U.S. WORLDWIDE POLICY WHICH ADVOCATES
FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION FOR ALL NATIONS ALONG INTERNATIONAL
AIR AND SEA ROUTES. IN ADDITION, THE TRADITIONAL PEACE-
TIME ACTIVITIES OF OUR FORCES ARE TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH

PEOPLES OF THE REGION BY PORT VISITS, CULTURAL EXCHANGES,

AND OTHER EVIDENCES OF U.S. GOODWILL. WE HOPE TO
CONTINUE THAT TRADITION WITH OUR CURRENT POLICY.

2. Q. WHY ARE WE EXPANDING OUR FACILITIES ON DIEGO
GARCIA?

A. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER RECENTLY
ANNOUNCED THAT THE U.S. WAS RETURNING TO A POLICY OF MORE
FREQUENT DEPLOYMENTS OF OUR FORCES TO THE INDIAN OCEAN.
CURRENTLY THE NUCLEAR POWERED FRIGATE BAINBRIDGE AND THE
DESTROYER ESCORT SCHOFIELD ARE OPERATING IN THE AREA. WE
INTEND TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AN AUGMENTED PRESENCE IN
THAT AREA MORE FREQUENTLY THAN IN THE PAST. DEPLOYMENTS
IN THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE FAR REMOVED FROM NORMAL U.S.
NAVAL SUPPORT FACILITIES IN THE PACIFIC. WE FEEL IT IS
DESIRABLE FROM BOTH AN ECONOMIC AND OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO OUR FORCES IN THE AREA A SAFE AND
DEPENDABLE HAVEN WHICH CAN PROVIDE EMERGENCY REPAIRS,
SUPPLIES, AND FUEL WITHIN CONVENIENT OPERATING RANGE.

3. Q. ACCORDING TO THE NIXON DOCTRINE, THE U.S. IN
THE YEARS AHEAD WILL SEEK A "LOWER PROFILE" IN OUR
INVOLVEMENTS ABROAD, AVOIDING UNNECESSARY COMMITMENTS OF
AMERICAN POWER IN REMOTE AREAS OF THE WORLD AND RELYING
TO A GREATER DEGREE ON THE FORCES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
TO PROTECT OUR COMMON INTERESTS. HOW CAN THIS PROPOSAL
FOR MAJOR EXPANSION OF OUR FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA AS
WELL AS THE PERMANENT PRESENCE OF AN INDIAN OCEAN TASK
GROUP BE RECONCILED WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NIXON
DOCTRINE?

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A. THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF FACILITIES ON DIEGO
GARCIA WILL NOT TRANSFORM THE ISLAND INTO ANYTHING OTHER
THAN A SUPPORT FACILITY. WE DO NOT FEEL THIS ACTIVITY
WILL BE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE NIXON DOCTRINE. ON THE
CONTRARY, GIVEN THE GEOPOLITICAL REALITIES OF THE INDIAN
OCEAN, THE UNITED STATES SHOULD SEEK TO LESSEN OUR
DEPENDENCE ON LITTORAL STATES FOR LOGISTIC SUPPORT TO A
NAVAL PRESENCE WE HAVE LONG MAINTAINED THERE IN DEFENSE
OF OUR VITAL SECURITY INTERESTS.

4. Q. IS OUR EXPANDED PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN
RELATED TO THE ARAB OIL BOYCOTT?

A. NO. YOU WILL RECALL THAT U.S. INTEREST IN
THE INDIAN OCEAN PREDATES THOSE EVENTS BY MANY YEARS. AS

I POINTED OUT, WE HAVE HAD A MIDDLE EAST FORCE IN THE AREA FOR NEARLY A QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

5. Q. HOW DO THE BRITISH REGARD OUR PROPOSAL REGARDING DIEGO GARCIA?

A. ON DECEMBER 30, 1966, THE UK SIGNED AN AGREEMENT MAKING THE ISLANDS COMPRISING THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES (BIOT), OF WHICH DIEGO GARCIA IS ONE, AVAILABLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF BOTH THE U.S. AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS FOR DEFENSE. CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS WHICH RESULTED IN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE IN DECEMBER 1970, FINALIZED OCTOBER 24, 1972, ESTABLISHED THE JOINT US/UK NAVAL COMMUNICATION FACILITY ON THE ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA. THE NEW CONSTRUCTION IS BUT A NATURAL EXTENSION OF THESE AGREEMENTS IMPROVING THE FACILITIES THAT NOW EXIST ON THE ISLAND. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN CONSULTED ABOUT U.S. PROPOSALS AND CONCURS WITH THE IMPROVEMENT PLANS.

6. Q. WHAT SORT OF ARRANGEMENT DO WE HAVE FOR USE OF DIEGO GARCIA?

A. AN AGREEMENT WAS CONCLUDED FOR A NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY ON DIEGO GARCIA BY AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES ON OCTOBER 24, 1972. THIS SUPPLEMENTED THE BASIC AGREE-
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MENT OF DECEMBER 30, 1966, REGARDING USE BY EITHER GOVERNMENT OF CERTAIN BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES (THE ISLANDS OF DIEGO GARCIA AND THE REMAINDER OF THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO, AND THE ISLANDS OF ALDABRA, FARQUHAR, AND DESROCHES). THE BASIC AGREEMENT IS FOR AN INITIAL PERIOD OF 50 YEARS.

7. Q. DOES THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA GO BEYOND WHAT WAS INITIALLY AGREED UPON WITH THE BRITISH?

A. THE CURRENT PLANS TO DEVELOP EXPANDED SUPPORT FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA ARE IN COMPLETE ACCORD WITH THE PHILOSOPHY SET FORTH IN THE ORIGINAL 1966 AGREEMENT FOR OUR USE OF THE ISLANDS IN THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO "FOR THE DEFENSE PURPOSE OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS AS THEY MAY ARISE." THE PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT OF SUPPORT CAPABILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA FALLS WITHIN HOSE PARAMETERS.

8. Q. IS THE UK CONTRIBUTING FINANCIALLY TO THE EXPANSION OF FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA?

A. NO. FUNDS FOR EXPANSION ARE BEING PROVIDED BY

THE UNITED STATES. AND, OF COURSE, IT IS THE U.S.
INSTALLATION WHICH IS BEING EXPANDED.

9. Q. WELL, DO THEY (THE UK) FURNISH PERSONNEL OR
OTHER SUPPORT?

A. YES. UK PERSONNEL ASSIST IN MANNING THE
FACILITY.

10. Q. HOW MANY UK PERSONNEL? WILL THEY BE INCREASED?

A. THERE IS A SMALL NUMBER WHICH IS REVIEWED
FROM TIME TO TIME.

11. Q. WILL BRITISH FIRMS BE ABLE TO TENDER FOR THE
WORK?

A. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT EXPECT THE WORK TO BE
CARRIED OUT BY U.S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION CORPS.

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12. Q. WHY DOESN'T THE UK MAKE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION,
IF THIS IS A COOPERATIVE DEFENSE EFFORT?

A. THE UK HAS MADE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION
BY PROVIDING THE REAL ESTATE REQUIRED FOR THE INSTALLATION
ON DIEGO GARCIA. A BRITISH NAVAL PRESENCE IS ALSO
MAINTAINED IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AS PART OF THE FIVE POWER
DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT (FPDA), INCLUDING UK, AUSTRALIA,
NEW ZEALAND, SINGAPORE, AND MALAYSIA, AND IN SUPPORT OF
OTHER UK DEFENSE COMMITMENTS THERE.

13. Q. WILL THE UK SERVICES ALSO INCREASE THEIR USE OF
THE ISLAND?

A. THE AGREEMENT WOULD PERMIT THIS. BUT THERE
ARE NO PLANS TO DO SO AT PRESENT. BRITISH MILITARY
AIRCRAFT EN ROUTE TO AND FROM THE FAR EAST USE A STAGING
FACILI
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